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Renting an Apartment in Massachusetts

In Massachusetts, there are many laws and regulations that govern the relationship between a landlord and a tenant, and the obligations of each party. These laws apply whether you live in or own a two-family with an apartment or a multi-family apartment building.

Before entering a rental agreement...

In addition to these laws, there are several issues that any prospective tenant and landlord should consider before entering a rental agreement:

- ✓ Does the rent cover all utilities? If the tenant is responsible for paying for the heat and hot water, the landlord should make clear whether these run on electric power, oil, natural gas, or propane. Is there information available that will provide a prospective tenant with an idea of the annual utility costs for the apartment?
- ✓ The landlord and the prospective tenant together should check every plumbing fixture, light switch, cupboard door, and appliance to make sure they all work properly. If repairs are necessary, both parties should discuss whether the landlord will make the repairs before the tenant moves in.
- ✓ Similarly, the lease or rental agreement should include a list of all repairs that the landlord agrees to make during the tenancy, and the timeframe in which the repairs must be completed.
- ✓ Are major appliances included with the tenancy? If so, what? Is this outlined in the rental agreement?
- ✓ Is parking available? Is there a fee involved, and if so, is it included in the rental payment?
- ✓ Will the landlord or the tenant will be responsible for snow shoveled from the walks in winter? Is it plowed from the driveway or parking area? Is there a fee involved, and if so, who pays for it?

For more information...

For more detailed information about landlord and tenant rights, please visit the Attorney General's Office website, www.mass.gov/ago, and view the publication, **The Attorney General's Guide to Landlord/Tenant Rights**. You may also contact the Attorney General's Consumer Complaint and Information hotline at (617) 727-8400.